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## **SBA and its Resource Partners Launch Tiger Teams**

***SBA's Resource Partners develop new program to help struggling businesses during economic downturn***

**SANTA ANA, CA-** The Santa Ana District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration and its Resource Partners, Orange County SCORE Chapter 114, Orange County Small Business Development Center and the Orange County Women's Business Center have joined forces to form "tiger teams" to help small businesses that need assistance during these tough economic times. Teams will consist of representatives from each organization, who will be selected based on the needs of each business. The tiger team will meet with businesses on-site to analyze their operations and make recommendations to assist them stabilize and improve their businesses.

The SBA is uniquely positioned to provide such services to small business through its Resource Partners. These partners are SCORE- Counselors to America's Small Business, Small Business Development Centers and Women's Business Centers. All offer free counseling services to small businesses throughout Orange County. The district office and its resource partners provided counseling and training assistance to approximately 35,000 clients in fiscal year 2008. The U.S. Small Business Administration provides partial funding for each of its partners and banks, colleges and universities, cities and counties provide matching grants that allow the resource partners to provide thousands of hours of counseling, training and technical assistance each year to small businesses. All counselors have extensive training and practical hands-on experience in the fields in which they counsel.

When asked about the Tiger Team initiative, SBA District Director, J. Adalberto Quijada, said, "The main goal of this program is to help businesses survive and thrive during this economic downturn and protect existing jobs and accelerate job

creation within the Santa Ana District." He added, "We have counselors with tremendous skills and real-life experience who have gone through the economic downturns in the early 1980s, 1990s, and 2000-2001. There isn't a business situation they have not encountered or resolved before."

The tiger teams will use a diagnostic software to stress test a business' financial performance; uncover the cause of business problems; plot future directions through goal seeking; create projections; discover solutions and avert potential disasters by running 'what-if' scenarios that allow the business owner or manager to make decisions before committing resources to such change. "Business owners are struggling during these challenging times. As a trusted resource partner of the SBA, the Institute for Women Entrepreneurs (OC Women's Business Center) felt the urgent need to respond and provide business owners relevant tools, information and resources to sustain their businesses through collaboration with agencies, associations and leading experts in their field." said Sallie Salinas, director of the Institute for Women Entrepreneurs.

A small business can expect to receive help identifying options for maintaining, stabilizing, changing and improving their business operations that result in increased revenues and profitability; enhancing customer satisfaction and retention; and understanding of the importance of maintaining good credit to increase the likelihood of obtaining financing.

This program was designed to assist any small business. Ideally, the business will have been in existence for two years or more; has five or more employees and annual revenues of \$2 million.

All services will be provided at no charge to Orange County businesses. Optional long-term counseling from SBA Resource Partners will also be offered to any business that needs it. This will also be provided at no cost.

This program will be offered throughout Orange County and expanded to the Inland Empire as demand grows.

Any business owner may make an appointment by calling the Tiger Team Program Coordinator, Jill Andrews, at 714.560.7466.

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